

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, PROP, CZ

SUBJECT: VOA JAMMING, GOC TO ALLOW SALE OF WESTERN NEWSPAPERS
IN JANUARY 1977

USIA FOR IBS AND IEU

REFS A) USIA 22455: B) PRAGUE 2161

1. MFA PRESS DIRECTOR MILAN KADNAR INVITED PAO FOR SEPT. 17
DISCUSSION OF SEVERAL PRESS QUESTIONS. KADNAR READ PREPARED
STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO EARLIER EMBASSY INQUIRY ABOUT POSSIBLE
VOA JAMMING FROM NON-CZECHOSLOVAK SOURCE, AND REQUESTING GOC
TECHNICAL MONITORS' ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING SOURCE. KADNAR SAID,
"AS INDICATED IN OUR PREVIOUS STATEMENTS, CZECHOSLOVAKIA DOES
NOT JAM VOA. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO PROVE, THROUGH OUR
TELECOMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY, THAT VOA IS BEING JAMMED, BUT IF
IT IS, IT IS FROM OTHER INTERNATIONAL STATES, AND NOT CZECHOSLOVAKIA.
"

PAO REPLIED THAT US DID NOT SUGGEST GOC WAS JAMMING VOA AND
THAT, AS PREVIOUSLY REPRESENTED TO MFA, WE WERE ASKING ASSISTANCE
IN OBTAINING INFORMATION ON SYSTEMATIC INTERFERENCE IN EARLY
MORNING BROADCAST. KADNAR REITERATED STATEMENT, AND PAO
FELT NO USEFUL PURPOSE WOULD BE ACHIEVED BY CONTINUING TO
REPEAT THE POINT.

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2. KADNAR THEN SAID FM CHNOUPEK WOULD HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE

SOON TO ANNOUNCE STEPS GOC "HAS TAKEN, IS TAKING, AND WILL TAKE TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF HELSINKI FINAL ACCORDS IN THE PRESS DOMAIN." PRINCIPAL ANNOUNCEMENTS WILL BE THAT, BEGINNING JANUARY 1, MAJOR WESTERN NEWSPAPERS (HE MENTIONED INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, LONDON TIMES, AND NEUE SUDDEUT SCHE ZEITUNG) WOULD BE ON SALE TO THE PUBLIC IN LIMITED QUANTITIES IN PRAGUE, BRATISLAVA AND KARLOVY VARY. ASKED IF OTHER WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, SUCH AS MONTHLY MAGAZINES AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS, MIGHT BE SOLD AT BOOKSTORES OR VIA SUBSCRIPTION, KADNAR SAID, "NOT YET. AS A FIRST STEP, WE DECIDED TO IMPORT ONLY MAJOR WORLD NEWSPAPERS. THERE WILL ALSO BE NEWSPAPERS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES WHO SIGNED THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT, SUCH AS TURKEY, FINLAND, AND NORWAY." HE ADDED, " YOU KNOW, WE ALREADY SUBSCRIBE TO 600 COPIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE." HE DID NOT ADD THAT THE PUBLICATION IS NOT PUBLICLY AVAILABLE, BUT GOES MAINLY TO GOC OFFICES.

3. WHEN ASKED IF THE MFA PRESS OFFICE WOULD BE DOING ANYTHING TO MAKE CANDIDATES IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK OCTOBER ELECTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS, KADNAR SAID THAT IN LATE SEPTEMBER HIS OFFICE WOULD ORGANIZE TWO PRESS CONFERENCES WITH CANDIDATES AT THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL, AND A PRESS TOUR OF SOUTHERN BOHEMIA "TO SEE HOW AN ELECTION WORKS." HE SAID HE WAS NOT SURE WHETHER OR NOT THE WESTERN PRESS ATTACHES WOULD BE INVITED, "AS THE WESTERN FOREIGN MINISTERS RARELY INVITE OUR PRESS ATTACHES TO ANYTHING." PAO POINTED OUT THAT CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS ATTACHE IN WASHINGTON HAD FREE ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE NEWS SOURCES AND THAT GUIDED PRESS TOURS WERE SOMETHING MOST JOURNALISTS IN THE UNITED STATES SOUGHT TO AVOID. PAO ALSO SAID KADNAR WOULD BE AMONG THOSE INVITED TO AMBASSADOR'S NOV. 3 ELECTIONS RETURNS WATCHING PARTY.

4. KADNAR ALSO SAID THAT, BEGINNING IN OCTOBER, MFA WILL ORGANIZE A MONTHLY PRESS BRIEFING WITH A CABINET MINISTER OR HIS DEPUTY, FOR CZECHOSLOVAK AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS, AS A MEANS OF MAKING LOCAL NEWSMAKERS MORE AVAILABLE TO PRESS. HE ALSO SAID THAT GOC HAD RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM NBC TELEVISION TEAM TO FILM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA BUT THAT, WHILE MFA WOULD APPROVE THE REQUEST, CZECH TV WAS UNABLE TO ACCOMMODATE THE GROUP THIS MONTH AND ASKED THEM TO POSTPONE THEIR ARRIVAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR A MONTH OR SO. POST HAD NOT HEARD OF ANY SUCH CONTEMPLATED VISIT BY AMERICAN TV TEAM.

5. KADNAR THEN SAID HE HAD HEARD FROM RADIO PRAGUE AND RUDE PRAVO OF THE PAO'S RECENT CALLS THERE. "THEY CALLED ASKING ADVICE, I SAID THEY SHOULD TREAT YOU LIKE ANY OTHER VISITOR. THAT IS THE WAY THINGS ARE IN OUR COUNTRY," HE COMMENTED.

6. THE MFA PRESS DIRECTOR ALSO TALKED ABOUT HIS RECENT VISIT WITH CHNOUPEK TO LONDON WHERE HE TOURED THE BBC, LUNCHEDED WITH MAJOR BRITISH FOREIGN AFFAIRS JOURNALISTS, SAW BRITISH NEWSPAPERS AND HAD AN OPPORTUNITY "TO SIT DOWN AND TALK WITH OUR CRITICS." KADNAR SAID THE BRITISH VISIT WAS "A VERY USEFUL EXPERIENCE" AND SAID HE HAD NEVER BEEN TO THE UNITED STATES.

7. BIO NOTE: KADNAR, IN HIS MID-40'S, WAS A SLOVAK JOURNALIST AND FORMER ASSOCIATE OF PM CHNOUPEK WHEN THE LATTER WAS A BRATISLAVA TV EXECUTIVE. HE THEN WENT TO BONN AND AS CTK CORRESPONDENT AND WAS HAND-PICKED BY THE FM FOR THE MFA PRESS JOB, WHERE HE HAS TAKEN AN INCREASINGLY ACTIVE ROLE IN PROMOTING GOC POLICY OBJECTIVES THROUGH THE MEDIA. HE IS OUTGOING, ARTICULATE, HIGHLY ABLE AT GIVE-AND-TAKE DISCUSSIONS, AND HAS A SMOOTH, PROFESSIONAL MANNER. HE DOES NOT AVOID CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONS.

8. COMMENT: IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE GOC DOES NOT WANT TO DISCUSS THE VOA JAMMING SOURCE. ON HELSINKI FINAL ACT IMPLEMENTATION, THE AVAILABILITY OF MAJOR WESTERN NEWSPAPERS, EVEN IN LIMITED QUANTITIES, AND IN MAJOR CITIES, WOULD BE A POSITIVE STEP, IF IT WERE REALIZED IN JANUARY. WE WILL HAVE TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT.
BYRNE

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